

Fisher Brothers Store and Bella Union Saloon
180 and 170 West California Street
Jacksonville
Jackson County
Oregon

HABS No. ORE-76

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PHOTOGRAPH

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY HABS No. ORE-76

FISHER BROTHERS STORE AND BELLA UNION SALOON

Location: 180 and 170 West California Street, Jacksonville,
Jackson County, Oregon.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The corner where the Fisher Brothers Store and the Bella Union Saloon stand is the oldest known business site in Jacksonville. Kenny and Appler opened the first store there in February 1852;¹ by 1855, references were made to the "old Kenny and Appler Corner," indicating that it had been the site of some kind of business structure for several years.² In 1856, Kenny divided the property into two lots. He sold the east half of the land "joining Mrs. Gass on the east" to James Burpee and David Linn,³ and mortgaged the west part of the lot to Frank Brown for \$1,500,⁴ securing money to pay the mortgage by remortgaging the land to James Hamlin in March 1857.⁵ Apparently Kenny needed the money to rebuild his store, since in that same year Love and Bilger secured a mechanic's lien "upon [Kenny's] new store house situated on the corner of California and Oregon Streets" for labor, tin, solder, zinc, iron, and pipe.⁶ Kenny seems not to have been a good businessman, since he could satisfy his debt to James Hamlin only by granting him a half interest and entering into a partnership in which Kenny contributed "his skill and services as a Salesman and Clerk" in the business of "buying selling and vending all sorts of Goods, Wares and Merchandize."⁷ Even with the partnership, the business did not prosper; in February 1862, A. Fisher and Brothers purchased the business and store for \$4,000 from the sheriff.⁸ The sale was to satisfy outstanding debts amounting to \$4,345 in favor of Joseph Leach and against James and Eliza Hamlin, Thomas Kenny, William G. Kenny, Rhoda Kenny, the minor heirs Daniel M. Kenny (deceased) under the guardianship of William T'Vault and Elizabeth Kenny, John Woods, C.C. Beekman, and E.C. Sessions. In 1863, Fisher advertised his brick store at the corner of Oregon and California Streets.⁹ Until the 1890s, the store remained in Fisher's ownership, although he sometimes operated the business in partnership with someone else.¹⁰

The Burpee and Linn partnership lasted until 1861, when Burpee sold his half of the carpentry shop on California Street to David Linn. Burpee retained his interest in other buildings owned by the partners.¹¹ In 1863, Burpee sold his entire interest to John Drum;¹² three years later, Linn bought out Drum to acquire a complete interest in the business.¹³ David Linn apparently did not continue to use the building

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on California Street as a carpentry shop, since the 1864 plat of the town shows it as the Bella Union Saloon.¹⁴ The Jacksonville Reveille Weekly reported in 1868 that a fire in A. Fisher and Brothers Store also damaged the Bella Union Saloon, operated by Henry Breithbarth.¹⁵ By early 1873 Breithbarth apparently had given up the business, since The Democratic Times for June 8, 1872, reported that Henry Judge and Jerry Nunan had formed a co-partnership and had their store one door east of the Fisher and Brothers Store.¹⁶ Judge had evidently opened the store even earlier, since in November 1871 he took out an insurance policy on a stock of saddles, bridles, harnesses, hardware, leather, and tools in a one-story building on the north side of California Street. According to the policy, there was a brick building to the west of Judge's store and a frame building to the east. In early 1874, the policy was renewed for three months; the fire that destroyed the Eldorado Saloon and buildings on the south side of California Street must also have damaged their store, since in May they collected \$2,020 from the Phoenix Insurance Company.¹⁷ Subsequently, they moved their business to a brick store adjacent to the U.S. Hotel.¹⁸ Beginning in 1877, Linn rented his brick store on the north side of California Street to Gustav Karewski.¹⁹

A brick building identified as "Burpee and Linn" is illustrated on the 1856 Kuchel and Dressel lithograph of Jacksonville, but the character of the building, with the three openings spanned by flat arches, is very different from that of the present structure. Earlier buildings on both lots may have been brick, but they have been remodelled or rebuilt, perhaps after the fire of 1874.²⁰

A Note on the Two Buildings Adjacent to the Bella Union Saloon:

The lot next to the Bella Union Saloon is now the site of a modern facade erected for the filming of the movie "The Great Northfield, Minnesota Raid;" the adjacent building is a low, one-story structure detached from the adjoining buildings. Originally, the site appears to have been the residence of Mrs. T. Gass shown on the Kuchel and Dressel lithograph; the deed from Kenny to Linn for the adjacent lot refers to the boundaries as a corner lot and Mrs. Gass' residence.²¹ In 1865, James Cluggage sold the west half of lot two to Temperence Fowler, who was the former Temperence Gass;²² she in turn sold it to Ned Langell,²³ a shoemaker,²⁴ who divided the lot into two parcels. The east half of his half lot was sold to E.H. West; it included the "east half of the frame building erected on said premises."²⁵

The east half of the lot was first the site of one of the earliest restaurants and bakeries, occupied by D. Alexander and Company. Alexander sold the business to Jean Baptiste Truchot,²⁶ who in turn deeded it to Albert Barnhart and Richard Weinbach;²⁷ Barnhart acquired

a complete interest in the business in 1858,²⁸ but in 1862 sold it to Claude Eme.²⁹ Eme's deed refers to the business as a "restaurant." In later years, the property was owned by Alfred Prather, who operated a saloon and bakery;³⁰ Lipman Coleman operated a general merchandize store there in the 1870's.³¹

FOOTNOTES

- 1
A.G. Walling, History of Southern Oregon, Comprising Jackson, Josephine, Douglas, Curry, and Coos Counties (Portland, Oregon: The Publishing House of A.G. Walling, 1884), p. 360.
- 2
Jackson County Deeds, May 18, 1855.
- 3
Ibid., September 16, 1856.
- 4
Ibid., November 8, 1856.
- 5
Ibid., March 23, 1857.
- 6
Ibid., May 30, 1857.
- 7
Ibid., April 7, 1858, and April 22, 1858.
- 8
Ibid., February 13, 1862.
- 9
The Oregon Intelligencer, June 20, 1863.
- 10
Morris Mensor was a partner in the business in the 1870s; in 1874 he sold his interest back to the Fisher brothers. Jackson County Deeds, May 2, 1874.
- 11
Jackson County Deeds, May 18, 1861.
- 12
Ibid., February 4, 1863.

13
Ibid., June 28, 1866.

14
C.E. Curley [and J.S. Howard], "Map of Jacksonville," 1864.

15
Jacksonville Reveille Weekly, October 10, 1868.

16
The Democratic Times, June 8, 1872.

17
Phoenix Insurance Company, "Insurance Book," MSS in Jacksonville Museum, Jacksonville, Oregon.

18
Jackson County Deeds, March 3, 1874.

19
Ibid., April 17, 1877. The lease was recorded among the deed records of the County; while the recording of leases was not a standard practice, this is not a unique case either.

20
Kuchel and Dressel, "Jacksonville, Jackson County, Oregon T[erritory]," 1856. This view of the town was distributed locally by W.W. Fowler and C.C. Beekman.

21
Jackson County Deeds, September 16, 1856.

22
Ibid., November 25, 1865.

23
Ibid., April 13, 1866.

24
Jackson County Commissioners' Journals, November 7, 1877.
Information on profession comes from the jury list.

25
Jackson County Deeds, April 19, 1875.

26
Ibid., April 5, 1854.

27
Ibid., June 26, 1857.

28
Ibid., March 2, 1858.

29
Ibid., January 16, 1862.

30
Ibid., June 15, 1869. Jacksonville Reveille Weekly, August 8, 1868.

31
Ibid., October 24, 1873.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. Description of Exterior:

1. Number of stories: Both buildings are one story.
2. Number of bays: Each facade is three bays with arched openings.
3. Layout, shape: Both buildings are rectangular, with greater depth than width. The Fisher Brothers Store building has a modern frame addition on the north end.
4. Wall construction, finish, color: The walls are brick. The Fisher Brothers Store building is unpainted; the Bella Union Saloon building has been painted pale green. The frame addition to the Fisher Brothers Store building is unpainted.
5. Openings: Except for the doorway at the southwest corner--which has been altered--the openings have segmental arches carried on heavy piers. The piers have no bases; each has a capital of three courses of projecting bricks. The arches are composed of three courses of headers on edge and an outer ring of headers laid flat; each course projects slightly beyond the next inner one. The arches unite at the springing. The central pier, marking the division between the two stores, is wider and has no capital. Within each opening, a lintel divides the arched top light from the rectangular sash below. In the Fisher Brothers Store building the top light is divided into vertical panes; in the Bella Union Saloon building, the lights have three-part fan divisions. Below the window sash, the arches have been

filled in with recessed brick panels. The opening at the southwest corner has been altered by the removal of the brick pier and its replacement with an iron column which permits access to the angled entrance. The outline of the former arched opening is visible in the brick.

6. Roof:

- a. Shape: The roof is flat, sloping slightly to the north. It is hidden behind a parapet.
- b. Cornice: On the facade, the wall rises above the arcade to form a parapet. The frieze is six courses of projecting bricks topped by a single course projecting still farther. A dentil course of bricks set on edge supports a slightly projecting course. The next two courses are capped by a final projecting course. The parapet above continues the plane of the wall. The wall along the west elevation is considerably lower; an S-curve section carries the facade wall down to the level of the side elevation. The cornice, which is similar to but not joined with the facade cornice, follows the curve and continues along the wall to the back of the building. There is no parapet above the cornice on this elevation.

B. Description of Interior:

The interior of each building consists of a single, large room. The present finishing is modern.

C. Site and Surroundings:

Both buildings are oriented with facades on West California Street. The west elevation of the Fisher Brothers Store building parallels North Oregon Street. Both buildings are built along the property lines.

D. Original Appearance:

Both store fronts once had regular three-bay arcaded facades; the arcade turned the corner, with a single bay on North Oregon Street. Wooden awnings supported by iron brackets once ran across the entire facade. The openings were probably all doorways with fanlights above double-leaf doors.

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Historic American Buildings Survey
1976